

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the readers and advertisers who participated in our "Best Of Waupaca" promotion! It is wonderful to see what an excellent response our communities put forth in supporting our local businesses!

We have finished the grueling task of tallying up all of the completed ballots that were returned to our office. Inside you will find a list of the first, second and third place results, along with a few select feature stories of the winning businesses. Please take the time to read what some of our winners had to say!

We encourage you, the readers, to patronize all of our local businesses, regardless of their placement. Your support to these businesses ensures that we can keep our small, hometown communities a viable place to live and work. Together we can strengthen relationships that improve our quality of life...

Think, Shop, Buy Local and everyone is a winner!

The staff of the Waupaca Buyers' Guide







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Hometown and downtown agent

BY KANA COONCE STAFF REPORTER

WAUPACA - Priding itself on its reputation for "providing the right insurance at the right price," Johnson Insurance Agency, Inc., has been a part of the Johnson family since 1946. Currently, the agency is co-owned by Pat Johnson, who works as an agent alongside his son, Kyle Johnson.

Their Waupaca office at 102 S. Main St. is in the heart of the downtown area at the corner Fulton and Main Street and across from the library and city hall.

Best-of-Waupaca Johnson Insurance specializes in matching clients with the best available auto, home, business, farm and life coverage for their needs at the best possible prices, partnering with insurance companies hand-picked by the agency in order to do so, according to the agency's website.

For more information on Johnson Insurance, visit their website, https://insureyourworld.com, send a message to their official Facebook account, facebook.com/insureyourworld, or give them a call at their Waupaca location at 715-258-2133 or their Clintonville location at 715-823-2133.





Lucky to have this place

BY JAMES CARD EDITOR

Another Best-of-Waupaca is Lucky Tree, the downtown boutique that has an eclectic mix of offerings that is of interest to both young and old. Here's a shopping tip: send the kids to the back of the store as that's where children's items are.

The adult stuff is up front.

It is best to describe the products in the store not by nouns (way too diverse) but by adjectives: some items are handy, sensual, heartwarming, beautiful, odd, ingenious, interesting or clever.

The shop is owned by Michele and Tim Drake and they opened Lucky Tree in

2011 with a desire to create a happy, colorful and welcoming store.

"Tim and I are so thankful to be open fourteen years later and seen as a favorite destination for locals and visitors alike. We hope Lucky Tree is a place to go when you need a little cheering up,





a little sunshine, or someone to talk to. We love getting to know our customers, and consider this the best part of running a shop in a small town," said Michele.

Recently they have reimagined the kitchen section and have a lot of new products in stock. There are plenty of unique gift ideas including bath and body, cards, games, and a booklover area. The back of the store has stuffed animals,

books and toys for kids. There is a book nook space cleared out to gather for Toddlertime once a month with Miss Lisa (as in Lisa Anderson, retired teacher) where children sing songs and listen to stories.

"It's been a real challenge to run a small business through Covid, road construction [Main Street's makeover] and a struggling economy. But we know that we have a great support sys-

tem in the Waupaca Community, and wouldn't want to be anywhere else," said Michele. "Waupaca is terrific! Thank you for shopping with us, and for voting for us as one of the 'Best of Waupaca."

The spring hours for Lucky Tree are Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hours will be longer starting in late May. The shop is located at 113 N Main Street.



New Mexican restaurant takes best-of top spot

BY EMILY DOUD STAFF REPORTER

WAUPACA – The transformation of the old Weasel's restaurant in Waupaca had the whole city talking, as repairs and renovations were taking place, the community waited patiently and finally Mexico Grill and Bar opened its doors and invited us in to try their classic family recipes.

This restaurant marks the eighth restaurant opened by Sergio Rodriguez and Jose Guzman, with locations spread throughout Wisconsin, with the first restaurant they opened being in Eau Claire.

Rodriguez said him and Guzman had wanted to open a restaurant in the Waupaca area for a while, coming to the area every couple of months, talking to the community to gauge interest in a new Mexican restaurant and scouting possible locations.

Rodriguez said he wanted the Waupaca location because he found it to be a great city with a lot of personality as well as a busy and happening place to be in the summer.

"Most people like Mexican food, like tacos, fajitas, margaritas," he said. "So that's why ... we really wanted to be here, because we thought it would be a great opportunity for us and I think for the people, it'll be a good add to Waupaca as well."



Sergio Rodriguez, one of the owners of Mexico Grill and Bar, mixes up some margs.

Emily Doud photos



Eventually they saw that the former Weasel's was for sale, Rodriguez said they knew it would be a lot of work, but they wanted to completely renovate the restaurant to make a nice, new addition to the city and community.

Rodriguez and Guzman are from Jalisco State in Mexico, which is where their recipes originate from.

Rodriguez said they make their own seasonings, which are traditional recipes from Jalisco State and are recipes passed down from his mother and grandmother.

Having authentic and unique, traditional recipes Rodriguez said is the key in their restaurants.

"If you serve Mexican food, you have to serve authentic, you know?" he said. "Whatever you're serving, you have to do authentic, because that's always going to be the difference, that's what makes the difference all the time."

Rodriguez said he has been so busy with his restaurants and opening the Waupaca location, he didn't realize he had won the top spot for best Mexican food, but was excited to hear the news and share it with the Mexico Grill and Bar staff.

"It was a long journey for us to open this and we have been working hard, it feels amazing," Rodriguez said of winning the top spot. "I feel happy, hard work pays off."

Outside of Waupaca and Eau Claire, they also have restaurant locations in Hudson, Viroqua, Plymouth, Sheboygan, New Richmond and Omro all of which are in Wisconsin.

"We love Wisconsin," he said. "Wisconsin, so far, is the best."

Their hours are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sundays they are open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

You can find them on Facebook at Mexico Grill and Bar or you can call for information at 920-859-0063.



Murals hung in Mexico Grill and Bar serve to really bring home that authentic Mexican vibe.

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From patios to rain gardens

TLC Lawn & Landscaping

BY NICK GRIESBACH

STAFF REPORTER

Best-of-Waupaca TLC Lawns & Landscaping has served the central Wisconsin area, and its residents as a locally owned and operated business for over 20 years. TLC Lawns and Landscaping is a landscape contractor that specializes in hardscaping, landscape design, shoreline restoration, snow removal and irrigation systems.

Tom Leonard, owner of TLC Lawns & Landscaping, said, "In the winter of 1998-1999, I researched the area for needed businesses. It looked to be in need of landscaping installation/hardscaping and lawn installs. I bought a new truck, trailer, tractor, and the tools needed. This is where I started TLC (Tom Leonard's Company) Lawns & Landscaping."

Tom Leonard's Company also takes care of lawn maintenance needs, providing lawn mowing, fertilization, weed control, trimming and clean up. It also includes planting shrubs, bushes and plants that have thrived in Wisconsin's tumultuous weather and climate.

"We specialize in hardscaping paver patios, retaining walls, shoreline steps, shoreline rip-rap, new lawn installs, new irrigation system installs and repairs, plantings, rain gardens, spring and fall clean ups, and mulching. We also do tree removal, stump grinding, and many other projects."







We THANK the community for your continued support and recognition.

TLC Lawns & Landscaping has competitive pricing for every service it provides. They believe they are voted for Best of Waupaca for what they can provide in services that are both high quality and unique in appearance.

"TLC Lawns & Landscaping provides a highly trained crew that brings experience and pride to every project and service that they provide, as well as providing competitive pricing. TLC has had numerous customers in all price ranges. We are not the cheapest company to have your work done, but if you want quality services and products with experienced installers that perform on schedule and done properly the first time, we are the company to call."

The landscaping & planting service provides different building materials to customize your landscape designs, such as rock, patio pavers, edgers, concrete, retaining walls, mulch and wood, to name a few of their extensive options. The TLC Lawn & Landscaping crew will create, design and install custom landscaping based on the client's needs and property.

TLC Lawn & Landscaping specializes in hardscapes around homes and businesses, including retaining walls, rock gardens, water features, patios and pavers to name a handful of options that can be provided, including customization. Fertilizing and weed

control is another option through their lawncare maintenance. It combines fertilizer, weed control applications and insect control, that provides proper nutrients for a healthy lawn.

TLC Lawn & Landscaping follows scheduled programs that they adhere to year-round. Each season, the TLC team will use a combination of products to ensure health and proper growth of their clients' lawns. TLC Lawn & Landscaping maintains healthy shrubs and bushes through trimming and any necessary removal to keep their clients' property safe and aesthetically pleasing.

Another service that TLC Lawn & Landscaping features is seasonal clean up for the spring and fall to maintain the property and prepare for the changes that can happen in the harsh winters and blistering summers, as well as raking leaves and removing dead wood, weeds and debris for healthy plant and lawn growth.

TLC Lawn & Landscaping can be reached through their website at tlclawn-sandlandscaping.com



Thank you for voting us Best Electrician again in 2024!





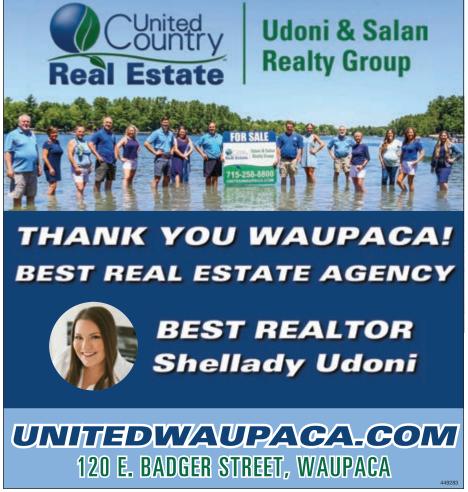
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Best 2024 Waupaca area

Auto Service Shop Little Wolf Automotive Bill's Auto Neuville Motors

Body Shop

Eastside Auto Body Townsend Auto Body Little Wolf Automotive

Auto Parts Store

O'Reilly's Auto Parts Napa Neuville Motors

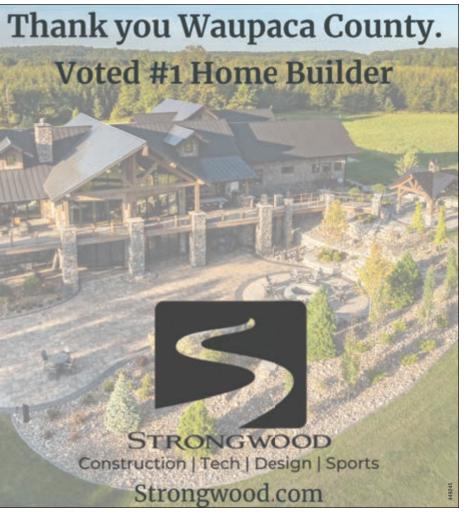
New Car Dealership

Neuville Motors Petersen Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Plach Automotive

Best Oil Lube

Little Wolf Automotive Neuville Motors Petersen Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram





Used Car Dealer

Neuville Motors Petersen Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram 3 WAY TIE FOR 3RD PLACE

Royal Automotive Nelson Auto Northport Motors

Bakery

Neumann's Piggly Wiggly Pick-N-Save European Delights

Bartender

Jon Krueger (Simpson's)
Dan Heuer (Thirsty Perch)
Blake Stecker (Wheelhouse)







Bloody Mary

Wheelhouse Simpson's 81 Market

Bowling Alley

Silver Lake Lanes Nelson's Strike Zone Waupaca Bowl

Breakfast

Waupaca Woods Little Fat Gretchen's Rose Garden

Buffet

Schueller's Great exSPECHTations Wheelhouse China House

Burger

Culver's Wheelhouse Chain O' Lakes Bar & Grill

Cheese Store

Weyauwega Star Dairy The Gouda Life Union Star

Chicken/Wings

Wheelhouse Chain O' Lakes Bar & Grill Kwik Trip

Coffee

Kwik Trip Aquamos Coffee House Java Jive

Family Dining

Waupaca Woods Wheelhouse Simpson's

Fish Fry

Waupaca Woods Country Inn Simpsons

Golf Course

Fox Fire @ Par 4 Glacier Woods Waupaca Country Club

Grocery Store

Neumann's Piggly Wiggly Aldi Pick-N-Save





Mexican Food

Mexico Grill La Margarita El Poblano

Oriental Food

Chef Chus China House

Pizza

Wheelhouse Chain O'Lakes Bar & Grill Filling Station

Soup/Chili

Wheelhouse Waupaca Woods Chain O'Lakes Bar & Grill

Steak

Simpson's Pine Tree Rustic Grill

Seafood

Simpson's
Waupaca Woods
TIE FOR 3RD PLACE
Country Inn
Pine Tree

Waiter/Waitress

Analeese Krueger (Wheelhouse) Nadia Cerne (Wheelhouse) Joana Garay (Simpson's)

Accounting Firm

Summit Accounting Janssen's Accounting Waypoint Financial

Bank

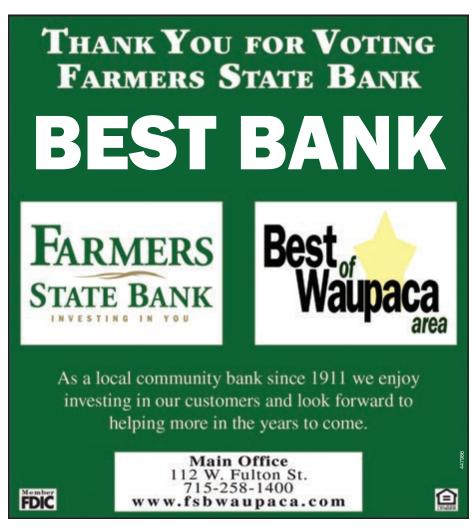
Farmers State Bank Community First Credit Union Bank First

Financial Planner

Waypoint Financial Pete Vanden Bush - Edward Jones Hong Chang (Farm Bureau)

Insurance Agency

Johnson Insurance State Farm Insurance C&D Professional - Rural Mutual





Insurance Agent

Ann Stern
TIE FOR 2ND PLACE

Dave Loken Pat Johnson

Law Firm

Maroney & Parry Kay Anderson Hart Law Office

Lender

Community First Credit Union Farmers State Bank Bank First

Realtor

Ben Lyons Jean Grenlie Shellady Udoni

Real Estate Agency

Re/Max Lyons Real Estate United Country & Salan Shambeau Thern

Savings Institution

Community First Credit Union Farmers State Bank Bank First

Tax Preparation

Summit Accounting Janssen Accounting H&R Block

Chiropractic Office

Koch Chiropractor Waupaca Chiropractor Chain O' Lakes Chiropractic

Dental Office

Riverhill Dental Waupaca Dental Excellence Crystal River Dental

Optical Office

Advanced Family Eyecare Community Eyecare Shopko Optical

Hearing Health Office

Rural Audiology Hearing Life Thedacare

Nursing Home

Bethany Park Vista Living Oaks @ Iola Living Assistance





Pharmacy

Walgreen's Hometown Pharmacy Stratton's Drug Store

Physical Therapy Office

Spine & Sport Physical Therapy Theda Care Advanced Physical Therapy

Appliace Store

Hansen Furniture, Appliance & Flooring Center Everyday Hometown Fleet Farm

Carpet Cleaner Firm

Ron Stearns Service King Amazing Cleaning Service

Carpet & Flooring Store

Hansen Furniture, Appliance & Flooring Center Flooring Express Stange's

Electrician

Bauer Electric
T&T Electric
3 WAY TIE FOR 3RD PLACE
Wally's Electric
Nett Electric
Solberg Electric

Furniture/Home Décor

Hansen Furniture, Appliance & Flooring Center Northern Home TIE FOR 3RD PLACE Everyday Hometown Stange's

Heating & Cooling

Westly Heating Sunshine Heating & Cooling All Temperature

Home Improvement Supplier

Noffke Lumber Torborg's Lumber Fleet Farm

Home Builder

Strongwood Log Homes K&E Builders Swanson Builders

Landscaping Service Provider

TLC Lawn & Landscaping Green Boyz Silvermist Garden Center





Lawn/Power Equipment Dealer

TLC Lawn & Landscaping Fleet Farm Swiderski

Lawn Service

Green Boyz TLC Lawn & Landscaping Melks Mow & Maintenance

Mobile Device Retailer

US Cellular Verizon Cellcom

Painter

Al William's Painting Christensen Painting Dave's Painting

Painting Business

Al William's Painting Christensen Painting Dave's Painting

Plumber

Woolsey Plumbing Chain O' Lakes Plumbing Big Mike's Plumbing

Beautician/Barber

Angie Diemel (Route 49)

TIE FOR 2ND PLACE

Leah Looker (Urban Roots)

Lauren Mancini (Studio 212)

Child Care Center

Sunny Day Preschool & Child Care Center Trinity Tiny Treasures & Trinity Preschool

TIE FOR 3RD PLACE

Little Lambs @ St. Paul's Lutheran Young Impressions

Clothing Store

Panache Fleet Farm Revival

Company to Work For

Kwik Trip Waupaca Foundry Advanced Family Eyecare

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Floral Company

Firefly Floral Deia Blooms **Barnwood Farms**

Funeral Home

A.J. Holly & Sons **Maplecrest** Voie Funeral Home

Gift Shop

Lucky Tree Main Street Marketplace 81 Market

Hair Salon

Route 49

Studio 212 **Urban Roots** TIE FOR 3RD PLACE

Blue Angel

Hotel/Lodging

Comfort Suites (Ale House) Ramada TIE FOR 3RD PLACE

Hotel Fremont Apple Tree B&B

Jewelry Store

Fletcher's Panache Revival

Marina

Becker Marine Amherst Marine Peterson Marine





Pet Care

Countryside Animal Hospital Waupaca Small Animal Hospital Paws-N-Claws

Photgrapher

Tim Koll (TK Photography)
Rachel Jansen Photography
JT Design (Jana Tappa)



Veternarian

Countryside Animal Hospital Waupaca Small Animal Hospital Amherst Vetrinary

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